

JIVE Workshop

30 October 2007

National Motorcycle Museum

Katie Perry



Effective Communication Skills

In 40 minutes!! Not very realistic, more like:
Some hints and tips on effective communication,
with a bit of practice thrown in!

We'll try and cover:

- Radio and television
- The interview (and how to survive it!)
- Common problems and misconceptions
- Questions

The Audience

- Who is your audience?
School children, the media, colleagues, mentees
- What is your message?
encouraging children into science, encouraging women up the career ladder, conveying complex science
- Be Informed – always!
ask questions, be prepared

Getting your message across

- The right approach – ‘nano man’
- Use University press office, professional societies, etc
- Think about the story – ‘new interesting protein characterised’ won’t sell papers or interest students but ‘possible new treatment for cancer’ will!
- There must be relevance for the audience ‘£2M grant brings smart homes a step closer’



Radio and Television

- ❑ Once again – BE PREPARED – know your audience and what they want
- ❑ Science programmes such as the Material World will have a more scientifically informed audience than a chat show on local radio
- ❑ Ask where and how the interview will take place – on the phone, in the studio?
- ❑ Is it just you and the presenter or others as well?
- ❑ Live vs recorded – pros and cons to both
- ❑ Think about your main points to get across

The Interview

- If it is radio – make some bullet points and have them in front of you – the last 10 seconds of an interview are the most important to get your main point across and give the listener something to take away with them.
- Speak more slowly than you think you need to – generally people talk too quickly
- Don't get flustered or try to fill gaps between questions – the presenter is paid to do that – answer concisely and wait for the next question
- Try to think in small sound bites – don't ramble and if you don't know something, never lie!

The Interview

- If the presenter asks you something nasty or something that you weren't expecting – don't panic, calmly say something like 'well you have caught me off guard there, that is not something we agreed to discuss' or a similar phrase and that turns it round and makes them look bad
- An alternative is to say 'that's a good question and I will answer it in a moment but more important is...'
- Try to use straightforward language and where possible relate things to what people will understand, for example its better to say 'one drop in an olympic swimming pool' that 'one part per 100 billion'



Common problems and misconceptions

- ❑ Not being prepared
- ❑ Seeing the media as the enemy – they have their job to do as well
- ❑ Being too technical
- ❑ Not having the right attitude
- ❑ Having unrealistic expectations
- ❑ Not asking enough questions